

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-26 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 21, 23 and 24 are independent. Claims 1-4, 21, 23 and 24 have been rejected. Claims 5-20, 22, 25 and 26 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Objection**Drawings**

The Examiner indicated that Fig. 25 should be designated by a legend such as -- Prior Art -- because only that which is old is illustrated.

Applicants submit herewith a proposed drawing for Fig. 25 labeled as Prior Art as suggested by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

In paragraph five (5) of the office action, claims 1, 2, 21, 23 and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,273,568 to Okuyama (hereinafter "Okuyama"). The Examiner indicated that Okuyama discloses each and every elements of the rejected claims.

Okuyama discloses a projection apparatus which is provided with a light source, a dichroic mirror, a projection lens and a display panel. In particular, the projection apparatus

includes a first and second dichroic mirror for combining color lights.

Each of the rejected independent claims (i.e., claims 1, 21, 23 and 24) requires a color combining optical system with a dichroic film the thickness of which increases or decreases. As Applicants understand it, the color separating system in Okuyama is not provided with any dichroic film the thickness of which increases or decreases. Accordingly, each of claims 1, 21, 23 and 24 is neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of Okuyama and other cited reference (i.e., U.S. Patent No. 6,235,435 to Peng), either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 21, 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully requested.

Applicants have not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that the foregoing places the independent claims from which they respectively depend in condition for allowance. Applicants however reserve the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

In paragraph eight (8) of the Office Action, claims 5-20, 22, 25 and 26 have been objected to as depending from rejected base claims.

Objected claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 1. Claims 2-4 have been amended so as to depend from claim 5.

Applicants believe that claim 5 and claims 2-4 are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Applicants respectfully submit that, as the independent claims from which the objected to claims depend are hereby placed in condition for allowance, these claims as pending are thereby also placed in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the

objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 27 has been added to recite the claimed invention in an alternative manner. Specifically, claim 27 recites a dichroic film formed at an interface between prisms such that the thickness of the dichroic film changes along the interface. In contrast, the dichroic film 13 of Okuyama is formed on a flat surface.

Applicants believe that the added claim is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

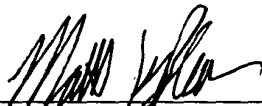
AUTHORIZATION

A petition for a two-month extension of time along with the associated fee is enclosed, extending the date for responding until March 3, 2003 (as March 2 falls on Sunday). Should an additional extension of time be required to render this paper timely filed, such extension is hereby petitioned and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any other fees necessitated by this Amendment, or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-4750). **A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.**

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: February 19, 2003

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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

Please amend claims 2-5 as follows. Please add new claim 27 as indicated below.

2. (Amended) A system according to claim [1] 5, wherein a thickness of the dichroic film increases or decreases from one end side to the other end side in the inclining direction.
3. (Amended) A system according to claim [1] 5, wherein a refractive index of the dichroic film increases or decreases from one end side to the other end side in the inclining direction.
4. (Amended) A system according to claim [1] 5, wherein the optical thickness of the dichroic film increases as an incident angle of the reflected chromatic light on the dichroic film increases.
5. (Amended) [A system according to claim 1,] A color combining optical system for combining color light reflected by a dichroic film and color light transmitted through the dichroic film,
wherein an optical thickness of the dichroic film increases or decreases from one end side to the other end side in an inclining direction of the dichroic film with respect to an incident optical axis of the color light reflected by the dichroic film,
wherein said optical system comprises a color combining prism, and the dichroic film is formed at the inside of said color combining prism.